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THE CENTRAL DIVISION OF THE MODERN LANGUAGE ASSO- CIATION OF AMERICA.

The second annual meeting of the CENTRAL DIVISION OF THE MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA was held at Washington University, St. Louis, Mo., December 29, 30 and 31, 1896.

FIRST SESSION, DECEMBER 29.

On Tuesday, December 29, the first session was called to order by the President of the Division, Professor W. H. Carruth. Professor Otto Heller, of Washington University, introduced the Hon. Cyrus P. Walbridge, Mayor of St. Louis, who gave an address of welcome.

The next speaker was Chancellor W. S. Chaplin, of Washington University, who welcomed the members on behalf of the University. In his speech Chancellor Chaplin dwelt at length on the position of the Modern Languages in the College curriculum and their importance in education.

Then followed the address by the President of the Division, of which the following is an abstract :

In the remarks which it was my privilege to make at the first annual meeting of this organization, attention was called to some statistics of our territory which concern teachers of modern languages. These figures throw

a sombre light upon the question which I am to discuss: *Original Research for Modern Language Teachers in Small Colleges*.—

Turning to the individual languages and their study, what I have to say is based primarily on conditions of work in German, but most of it will probably apply to English, French and other foreign languages. The most special training is required for research in the field of historical phonology. At the same time, I think this field has already been more exhaustively cultivated. The average scholar, remote from large libraries, can only sigh as he looks at a criticism of Verner's Law, or a Reconstruction of X-words, and exclaim with the Psalmist: "It is high; I cannot attain unto it!"

But the same is not true of the study of the vocabulary, the inflections, and especially the syntax of individual authors. Any person who is not quite out of place in a language chair is qualified to carry on investigations in these lines. Syntax especially seems to me to have been neglected in favor of phonology by the great German philologists. But in any one of these three lines—vocabulary, inflections and syntax—there is enough of unexplored territory, while the pioneer's tools are comparatively simple. Take, for instance, so prominent a writer as Lessing. Is there such a thing as a Lessing dictionary? I think not. But English students have made Shakespeare lexicons, and are making a Milton lexicon; why should there not be a Lessing lexicon? Now, while the doubtful points in such an undertaking must be settled by high authorities, the preliminary work can be done by very humble hands, with a little guidance. Again, is there such a thing as a Lessing grammar? Is there anywhere a complete survey of his inflections or his syntax? I have not heard of it. But certainly these are as worthy subjects for investigation as the minute researches in phonology which occupy so much space in philological journals. To properly judge the source, and trace the history of an inflection or a construction, requires, to be sure, very extensive knowledge and experience, but to systematically record the usage of an author requires only patience and accuracy and good sense. I would compare such work to that of the collectors for natural history museums. While these need not be high scientific authorities, they are useful servants of science, and may in the course of time and as the result of such work, come to be genuine scientists. For my own part I would rather know, for instance, whether Lessing makes any distinction between *welcher* and *der* as relative pronouns, than know whether his final dental stop after an accented vowel was *weiches t* or *hartes d*. A host of studies could be made on Lessing alone. The length of his sentences in earlier and later works; the involution of subordinate clauses; his figures of speech; his use of participial constructions as substitutes for clauses, and so on. These can be made on single works or on several works compared, or, in the course of time, the author's whole work surveyed. If this be yet the case with Lessing, how much more so with his humbler contemporaries and the writers who preceded him?—

Several of the studies I have suggested could be undertaken by a committee which might distribute portions of the work among instructors in half a dozen or a dozen schools, the results to be collated by the committee, or by some one especially competent for the work. You may smile, perchance, at my vision of coöperative philology, but will you also think about it? If my dozen coöperators were together in the seminar at a great university, would they not be working in just this way? Why should we not continue for ourselves, so far as possible, the pleasures and benefits of *seminar* work?

I have thus far assumed that it is the ambition of every scholar to be an investigator. If it is not so, it certainly should be. And I say this not simply from the standpoint of unselfish devotion to science, but because the intellectual life of most scholars, yea, of every scholar, needs at least a little of this discipline. There is a confidence and satisfaction which comes from the attainment of original results, however humble, that lifts the soul and gives tone to the whole work of the teacher. The love of all sciences springs from the love and cultivation of even a small corner of one.

The study and teaching of the modern languages is only beginning to come to its own. Whether we wish it and welcome it or not, the time is coming when modern languages will be accepted in full satisfaction of the language requirement for entrance to college. For my own part I do not wish to speed that day. It will come soon enough. My only concern is lest it come and find the academies and high schools of the country unable to match in modern languages the solid standards of Latin and Greek. The Modern Language Association can do no better work than to encourage scientific language study in the academies and small colleges of the land.

After some explanatory remarks by the Secretary concerning the programme, the society adjourned to the Museum of Fine Arts, where a reception was tendered to the members of the Association and invited guests by the Board of Directors and the Faculties of Washington University.

SECOND SESSION, DECEMBER 30.

The Second Session met at 9.15 a. m. in the Lecture Hall of the University; President W. H. Carruth occupied the Chair.

Professor John Phelps Fruit, the Treasurer of the Division, presented the following report :

Report of the Treasurer of the Central Division of the Modern Language Association of America :

RECEIPTS.

1896.	Jan.	From the former Treasurer, . . .	\$30 15	
		Dues from Prof. Gerber, . . .	3 00	
	Mar.	From the Secretary, . . .	44 68	
	Nov.	" " " . . .	15 00	
	Dec. 28.	" " " . . .	3 00	
	" "	" " " . . .	15 00	
	" "	From the Treasurer of the M. L. A.,	15 00	
				<hr/>
				\$125 83

EXPENDITURES.

June.	To the Treasurer of the M. L. A., .	\$75 00	
	Stamps and envelopes, . . .	2 83	
Dec. 29.	To the Secretary for expenses, .	20 10	
			<hr/>
			\$ 97 93
	Balance on hand,		27 90
			<hr/>
			\$125 83
			<hr/>

The amount of unpaid dues for 1896 is \$83.00. With the exception of one membership-fee during the year, and several at this meeting, no money has come to the Treasurer but through the Secretary's hands. This is a clear indication that the work of the Treasurer's office has been done by the Secretary, and that a different disposition of the Treasurer's office should be made.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN PHELPS FRUIT,
Treasurer.

The following Committees were then appointed by the President :

- (1) To audit the Treasurer's report: Professors Glen L. Swiggett and J. M. Dixon.
- (2) To nominate officers: Professors G. E. Karsten, F. A. Blackburn, C. W. Pearson, W. E. Simonds, Raymond Weeks.
- (3) To recommend place for the next Annual Meeting: Professors A. G. Canfield, J. P. Fruit, L. Fossler, Ch. Benton, E. Jack.

In his report the Secretary gave an account of his activity as a member of the Executive Committee and of the Editorial Committee. After having presented the statistics of membership and a resumé of the official correspondence the Secretary continued :

The Secretary begs leave to add a few remarks about the future policy of the Central Division, not in the spirit of unduly influencing the views of the members, but with a thought of removing any obstacle in the way of a correct appreciation of the situation.

The plan adopted by the Central Division was the one suggested in the propositions of the special Committee of the Modern Language Association (cf. *Proceedings for 1895*, p. xx). Professor G. E. Karsten, as Chairman of the Central Division Committee, has been in correspondence with this Committee. The report, which will be presented at this session, embodies the opinion of the Eastern Committee that a different or closer formulation of the plans of organization be left to future experience. After one year's trial it may be a fit question for discussion here whether the original statutes need any modification or whether the whole plan of coöperation should be remodeled. The second alternative will surely be discountenanced by those that have carefully followed the development of the Central Division.

To secure the desired harmony in matters that are largely at the discretion of individual views and interpretation, the Secretary of the Modern Language Association recently had an interview with the Secretary of the Central Division, in which the relations of the two Associations were discussed and opinions exchanged as to the best course of proceeding in the future. The Secretary was also present during a meeting of Professors J. W. Bright and A. H. Tolman, members of the Eastern Committee of Four. The propositions formulated by this Committee will be presented to this body by Professor A. H. Tolman.

The Secretary takes occasion to give information about one point in the statutes of the Division that, to judge from correspondence and personal expressions, seems to be somewhat obscure; this is the question of membership in the Central Division. Our Constitution provides the following: "All persons elected members of the Central Division of the Modern Language Association shall be *ipso facto* members of the Modern Language Association of America." As the converse holds true also, the Central Division has no clearly defined individual membership. Although there may be objections to this condition, the officers think that any change in the present arrangement, according to which any member of the Association may attend either meeting as a member of that body, must necessarily lead to complications that will render the administration of either Division almost an impossibility.

Professor G. E. Karsten, as Chairman of the Committee on Organization, reported that the Secretary's statement contained the result of the negotiations with the Eastern Committee of Four.

Professor A. H. Tolman presented the following recommendations formulated by the Committee of Four :

1. All bills for membership dues shall be sent from the Treasurer of the Association, and shall be payable to him.
2. All official publications, including programmes and other announcements, whether printed by the general Association or by the Central Division, shall be sent to all the members of the Association.
3. The Editorial Committee shall consist of three members,—one to represent the Association, one to represent the Central Division, and, *ex officio*, the Secretary of the Association. This Committee shall determine all questions touching the publication of papers and articles by the Association. The present practice is commended, in accordance with which the three members of this Committee represent the Germanic, Romanic, and English departments.
4. It is recommended that the Secretary of the Central Division shall also hold the office of Treasurer.

On motion of Professor Ch. B. Wilson, the above recommendations were accepted.

The reading of papers was then begun.

1. "New interpretation of passages in Chaucer's *Prologue*." By Professor Ewald Fluegel, of Leland Stanford Jr. University.

In the absence of the author this paper was read by Professor F. A. Blackburn. It will appear in full in the *Journal of Germanic Philology*, Vol. I.

Remarks were made by Professors A. H. Tolman, C. A. Smith, and F. A. Blackburn.

The Secretary made the following announcement :

"The Directors of the University Club (Grand Ave.) extend a cordial invitation to the members of the Modern Language Association to make the Club their home during their sojourn in St. Louis. Cards signed by the Secretary admit."

2. "On the original form of the Sigfrid saga." By Professor Julius Goebel, of Leland Stanford Jr. University. [Read by Professor W. E. Simonds.]

The paper was discussed by Professors F. A. Blackburn, W. H. Carruth, L. Fossler and H. Schmidt-Wartenberg.

3. "Goethe's influence a possible factor in Schopenhauer's pessimism." By Professor Otto Heller, of Washington University.

While Goethe's relations with eminent contemporaries seem to be pretty well explored, the influence exerted by him upon Schopenhauer still offers a field for investigation. The two men held each other in extraordinarily high regard, and in some important respects their world-views were strikingly consonant.

Schopenhauer first met Goethe in his mother's house. In the winter of 1813-14 a lively intercourse took place between the two. Schopenhauer was made acquainted with Goethe's experiments and speculations on the subject of his *Farbenlehre*. Later many letters were exchanged. G. predicted that S. would "eines Tages und allen über den Kopf wachsen." Notices relating to S. are found in *Tag- und Jahreshefte*, sub 1816 and 1819. In May, 1814, G. inscribed a significant couplet in S.'s album. He watched the young doctor's career with keen interest. About *Die Welt als Wille und*